



Te Puna Oranga

Te Puna Oranga (or “The Spring of Life”) is the name given to our new community garden and makerspace by Ihumatao mana whenua Pania Newton. She felt the name reflected the wairua of the space and its role in bringing to life the hopes and aspirations ME Family Services has for our community: a thriving, regenerative community where everyone and everything has value.

The space has come to life over the past year and a half, starting with lots of storytelling to help us remember how this land came into being and evolved over time. From a swamp, to farmland, to the muddy end of a school field in the middle of the suburbs, we wanted to capture the essence of the space and find out what its unique contribution could be to the local community.

Using the metaphor of the swamp, we saw that the space had a role to play in capturing the “waste” from our neighbourhood and finding the value in it, turning it into something precious. The entire site is constructed from local neighbourhood “waste”- tyres for garden beds, a shipping container for our makerspace, pallets for our deck and garden shed, an old chicken coop for our seedling house, old bed heads for plant supports. The garden is maintained and developed by our Regenerative Practitioner Koia Teinakore, alongside many fabulous local time-traders.

Te Puna Oranga offers the kind of space every community is in need of- somewhere people can go to feel valued, make a contribution, share knowledge about growing food and eating well, and rethink how we create and deal with “rubbish”.

It can provide a doorway in to the wrap-around support offered by ME Family Services; social work support, Early Childhood Education, Driver Licensing, micro-business support. And most importantly it can connect people to their local community.

Te Puna Oranga is open Monday to Friday, 9-3 if you’d like to drop in and visit us. Or you can contact us to make a time (justine@mefsc.org.nz, 0221028195).